

# MARKETING EXCELLENCE 2

## Channel 4

Sparking a national  
debate on nutrition



MARKETING  
SOCIETY

AWARDS FOR  
**EXCELLENCE**

in association with  
**Marketing**

# About The Marketing Society



## **INSPIRING BOLDER MARKETING LEADERSHIP**

The Marketing Society is a not-for-profit organisation owned by its members, with over 2500 senior marketers. Over the past 50 years it has emerged as one of the most influential drivers of marketing in the UK business community.

The Society challenges its members to think differently and to be bolder marketing leaders by supporting the development of leading-edge thinking, and promoting the evidence of effective marketing. The Society does this through the Marketing Society Awards for Excellence; its publications Market Leader, Our Week and rich online Knowledge Zone; a national programme of world-class events; innovative professional development, such as the annual Marketing Leaders Programme; and extensive on-and-offline networking opportunities.

[www.marketing-society.org.uk](http://www.marketing-society.org.uk)

# Foreword

By Roisin Donnelly,  
President of The Marketing Society

## What is marketing excellence?



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Marketing excellence can drive breakthrough business results for the short and long term. Marketing excellence requires great strategic thinking, great creative thinking and perfect execution.

But how do we assess *marketing* excellence? First we choose brilliant industry judges who are all experienced and successful practitioners of excellence and we ask them to pick out the cases which they see as remarkable. We ask them to look for two key qualities from our winners: creativity and effectiveness.

But marketing continuously changes and evolves, as consumers become more sophisticated and demanding and the media for communicating with them ever more diverse. So the standards for marketing excellence change and in turn become more demanding.

We believe that The Marketing Society Awards for Excellence in association with *Marketing* set the standard of marketing excellence in the UK. They have established this reputation over a period of

more than 25 years, and they have always been based on the principle of searching out the best examples of different marketing techniques in action, that showcase great strategic thinking, great creativity and perfect execution.

In order to be a winner of one of the Society's Awards, marketers have to demonstrate that what they have done is outstanding in comparison with marketing in all industries not just their own particular sector.

If a marketing story has been good enough to impress our judges, then all marketers can learn from it – however senior they have become. The collection of case histories brought together in this book is the best of the best from the past four years of our Awards, and I am confident that it truly demonstrates *marketing excellence*. I have been truly inspired by these case studies and I hope you will be too.

# Channel 4

## Sparkling a national debate on nutrition

### Snapshot

The compelling combination of a culinary icon and a social marketing campaign triggered the start of a food revolution.

### Key insights

- An inspired partnership of Channel 4 and TV chef Jamie Oliver took on the huge challenge of tackling the significant rise in childhood obesity through a radical TV series.
- Built around the high-profile TV programme, the multi-channel campaign departed from the norm by fusing programming into the marketing mix.
- The result was not only a massive leap in government funding, but it netted Channel 4 an impressive 148% return on investment.

One of the more imaginative approaches to tackling this disturbing trend began in 2005 with the inspired pairing of TV chef Jamie Oliver and Channel 4. The result was an integrated campaign which was built around a high-profile TV programme and which had an impact far beyond the programme alone.

Not only did Channel 4 benefit commercially, but, even more importantly, the campaign achieved its goal of attracting increased government funding for school dinners of £280 million.

### Summary

Today's generation of children is the first in history to be expected to die before their parents as a result of long-term health and diet-related problems. The problem is that school dinners provide a significant proportion of children's diets, and over the years, cost-cutting had seen food being offered on the basis of cheapness rather than nutritional value.

## Championing change

The direct and indirect costs of obesity are estimated to be approaching £7 billion a year. This is particularly disturbing in regards to children:

- Children now wear trousers two sizes larger than in the 1980s.
- Obesity has tripled with 31% of children now overweight or obese.
- 94% of 7-10 year olds consume more saturated fat than recommended.

In 1978 the government had set out to halve expenditure on school dinners to £190 million, leading to food being provided on the basis of cheapness rather than nutritional value. Various individuals and groups had tried to influence local and national government policy on this issue but with little significant or widespread effect. For meaningful change to take place, the children needed a champion to make school dinners an issue of national interest.

The desire to inspire change and create national debate are central to Channel 4's brand values and remit. Channel 4 was thus a natural media partner for TV chef Jamie Oliver in his crusade to change the state of school dinners. At the core of the partnership would be an innovative 360-degree integrated campaign built around a TV series. This was to be a new generation of integrated campaigns fusing programming into the advertising and marketing mix — akin to a cause-related advertiser-funded but programming-led approach.

## Shining the spotlight on school dinners

The big challenge was to make the topic of school dinners a ratings success. This would not be an easy task. School dinners might smell of many things, but certainly not of ratings success. To make a commercially viable campaign and a real difference to the health of the nation required the full marketing clout of both Channel 4 and Jamie Oliver to catapult this to a matter of national debate.

While having Jamie on board was crucial, it was no guarantee of success. Only a series on the same scale as 'Lost' or 'Desperate Housewives' could have the required impact — a tough call given the subject matter.

A series of discussions between Channel 4 and various other stakeholder parties led to a coalition of partners with the brief to deliver from scratch one of the highest profile TV series of the year, and to build around this an entire campaign for change. The objective was very ambitious: to secure £280 million additional funding for school dinners from the government.

A campaign team was brought together consisting of a rainbow coalition of stakeholders. Specific, measurable targets were put in place:

- Commercial payback for Channel 4.
- Minimum spend of 50p per plate for school dinners (an increase of 43%).
- The introduction of enforceable nutritional standards and greater food education.

The campaign strategy is illustrated by Figure 1 overleaf.

## Banging the drum for school dinners

Jamie Oliver's celebrity, let alone the subject matter, would simply not be enough to attract viewers or generate positive press coverage. To capture the public imagination, advertising had to establish Jamie's School Dinners as a high-profile, flagship Channel 4 series rather than a worthy factual docu-series featuring a famous chef. Large audiences had to be delivered from the start, at least in line with the 3.7 million viewing average for the slot. Because Jamie's School Dinners was to be only a four-part series, there wasn't time to build the audience through the quality of the series. Advertising had to deliver viewers from the start.

Promotional airtime began on 9th February, 2005, with Jamie's plea to the nation being defaced by the kids' graffiti in the TV trailers. The weight of airtime increased up until the first show in the series. A heavyweight national outdoor campaign made use of 'chameleon' sites for 48-sheet and 96-sheet posters, which changed every evening so that they appeared to be graffitied with the kids' hostile messages (Figure 2).

In quality broadsheet magazine supplements, front and back images of Jamie Oliver on consecutive pages were used to show the kids playing pranks behind Jamie's back to sabotage his campaign. There was also a dedicated cover wrap for *Observer Food Monthly* magazine (Figure 3). Meanwhile, to provide support and galvanise action for the campaign, a dedicated website was developed: [www.feedmebetter.com](http://www.feedmebetter.com).

Finally a paid-for direct marketing pack was developed containing detailed advice, recipe cards, campaigning tools, etc, for schools, dinner ladies and parents.

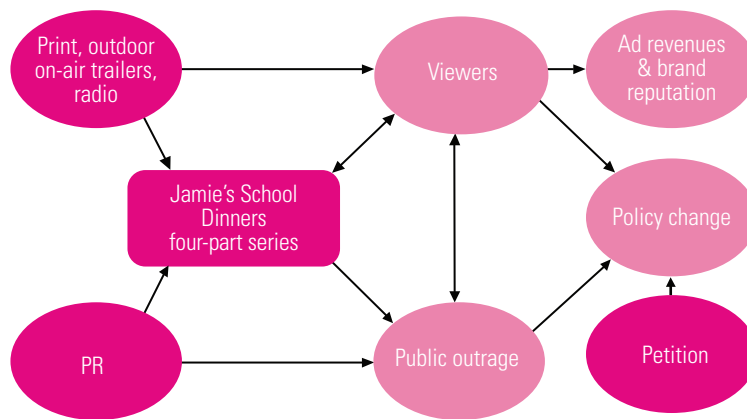


Figure 1. The campaign strategy



Figure 2. Posters



## Spreading the word

Public relations (PR) had to attract millions of viewers, plus make school dinners an issue of national importance and put it on the agenda item for every newspaper and politician. There were three broad phases.

### 1. Managed PR by Channel 4

The single biggest risk was that using Jamie would backfire, with cynical journalists focusing upon his actions and motivations rather than the bigger issues involved.

So the brief was to keep journalists on message, place sound bites, and enable them to get involved in the campaign itself since their participation would be critical to success. This managed PR took a very clear problem / solution campaigning focus:

- This is a key social issue about the state of school food (*not* a Jamie programme).
- This is what Jamie did/found out.
- This is the recommended solution.

PR activity began at the same time as the advertising in order to create as much 'pull' to the programme as possible.

### 2. Supporting PR driven by the media

Once the series had begun in a blaze of publicity, the press began to run with the story. PR throughout this stage was critical in providing information and resources to journalists, escalating this from a TV series to a serious national issue.



Figure 3. Observer Food Monthly cover wrap

### 3. The petition

A key part of the PR plan was the development of an online petition in partnership with Poke and Jamie Oliver's team at [www.feedmebetter.com](http://www.feedmebetter.com). This petition was intended to generate 30,000 signatures for Jamie to deliver to Downing Street.

#### A big breakthrough

Pre-transmission advertising delivered notable ad awareness. Series awareness also reached record levels for Channel 4, with 94% total awareness prior to transmission. In addition, record levels of awareness were generated per £ spent, as Figure 4 shows.

Ad awareness was synchronised with PR and press coverage, with 35 major articles written before transmission, spanning a breadth of titles including almost all the popular and broadsheet newspapers, plus [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk) and Radio 1.

Integrated advertising and PR ensured record levels of awareness which directly followed through into viewer interest, with 1.1 million viewers above average for the slot. The campaign generated first episode audiences per £ spent in excess of Channel 4's most famous blockbuster series of 2005 (Figure 5). Between February and April 2005 the campaign website achieved over 10 million hits — a figure that would have been significantly higher were it not for the servers melting down due to the levels of unexpected demand. The website achieved a massively higher reach than its nearest equivalent to date, which was the Soil Association's 'Food for life' campaign.

The website focused upon a petition which exceeded its original target almost tenfold, with a total of 271,677 signatures and 3,000 letters sent to MPs.

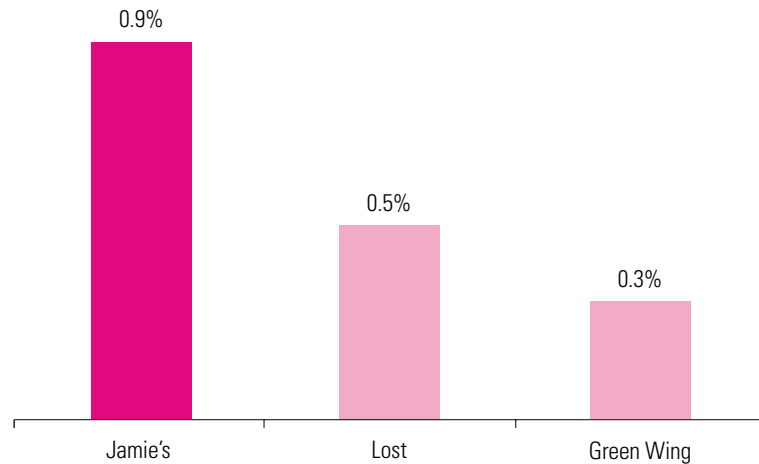


Figure 4. Awareness per £1k spent on paid-for media  
Source: Channel 4 (Hall & Partners)



Figure 5. Average first episode viewers per £1k spent on paid-for media  
Source: Channel 4 sales/OMD



The petition was delivered to Downing Street on 30th March, 2005, an event which was the top news item on all the TV news bulletins that day.

### Winning on every front

This was one of Channel 4's highest ratings winners of 2005, which made it a 'must have' series for any TV buyer looking for young, upmarket light TV-viewing adults. It was therefore classified as a 'special' by Channel 4 ad sales, a classification which added a 50% premium to the advertising revenue, equating to actual revenues of £6.69 million.

The campaign made school dinners headline news and a national talking point. Between January and June 2005 there were a total of 1,016 articles with mentions of Jamie's School Dinners, including 21 key leader articles. Evaluation of print media coverage showed the PR value was worth at least an additional £14.1 million.

The total campaign, including the production of the entire TV series and all the costs of media and production, cost just £4.52 million, which was a tiny fraction of the total marketing budgets of 'junk food' advertisers aimed at kids. The campaign surpassed targets in a number of ways:

- The TV series itself delivered a total advertising surplus of £2.18 million above total costs — a net conventional return on investment of 148%.
- As a direct result of the publicity generated by the campaign, the government announced a £280 million funding increase, with £220 million to deliver a minimum ingredient spend of 50p per meal for primary schools and 60p for secondary schools, backed with minimum nutritional standards.

- The campaign revitalised Jamie Oliver's brand image, taking him from celebrity chef to a truly national hero and champion of change.
- The campaign helped Channel 4 meet its remit of inspiring change and creating national debate about key issues, and as such was of significant (but intangible) value to the Channel 4 brand.

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BT has evolved from being a supplier of telephony services to become a



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We are working hard every day to build the company around what our customers want from us. That's why Aviva now ranks among the UK's top ten most valuable brands, according to the 2010 Brand Finance Global 500 survey and that success is something we are looking to replicate across the world.



leading provider of innovative communications products, services, solutions and entertainment products. BT's business customers range from multinational, multi-site corporations to SMEs and start-ups.

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BT has been a driving force behind the success of 'Broadband Britain'. Thanks to the company's investment, nearly every home in Britain now has access to broadband and in September 2009, BT announced plans to more than double the availability of its fastest fibre broadband service.

# MARKETING EXCELLENCE 2

“A treasure trove of examples covering the whole waterfront, from launching new brands to revitalising, sustaining and extending established ones, and from insights to advertising and sustainability. Whatever your business, it should make you proud to be a marketer, shake up your thinking and inspire you to go the extra mile.”

Professor Patrick Barwise, London Business School, Chairman of Which?

“This exciting book demonstrates how great marketing can solve the most difficult problems, through analysis, teamwork and creativity.

It contains 34 fascinating case studies, selected from hundreds of high quality entries to The Marketing Society Awards for Excellence. Those involved had the determination to win, and the courage to think differently. An inspiring read.”

Professor Hugh Davidson, Co-Founder, Oxford Strategic Marketing

“This is the textbook, the toolkit and the manual for marketing excellence.”

Cilla Snowball, Chairman, AMV BBDO

“These cases are a great source to stimulate your thinking. Some will stimulate new thoughts, some will unlock ideas from the back of your memory. All of them however are great fuel for growth.”

Keith Weed, Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, Unilever

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